

# The Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service

## The Cabinet for Health and Family Services



# T H E H E R T L I N E

T A K I N G T H E P U L S E  
COVERING VOLUNTEERISM AND SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH

This Quarter: 2005 Make A Difference Day (Cover & Pg. 5) - 2005 AmeriCorps Launch (Cover & Pg. 3-4) - An AmeriCorps Family (Cover) - Commissioner Spotlight (Pg. 3) - Wedding Announcement (Pg. 5) - From the Training Desk (Pg. 5) - 2005 Governor's Volunteer Awards (Pg. 5) - New KCCVS Staff Member (Pg. 6) - Note from our Training Officer (Pg. 6) - New AmeriCorps Program Director (Pg. 6) - Writing Award Winning Nominations (Pg. 7)

### 2005 MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY



In observance of this year's Make A Difference Day and in support of Governor Fletcher's Get Healthy Kentucky! initiative, the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service KCCVS will host a health education fair in downtown Frankfort.

Created by USA Weekend magazine, Make A Difference Day is an annual observance dedicated to helping others – a celebration of neighbor helping neighbor. The KCCVS has long observed Make A Difference Day as an opportunity to help the citizens of Kentucky and raise awareness of community service and volunteer needs and opportunities.

In previous years, the KCCVS has led statewide efforts to collect beef stew for hunger prevention programs around the state and encourage groups and individuals to undertake some form of volunteer service to make a difference in their communities.

This year, the KCCVS is focusing attention on making a difference in the health of Kentucky for this year's observance. "Because Kentucky ranks poorly in a number of health indicators, we wanted to add another voice to the 'get healthy' message," the KCCVS Director Eileen Cackowski said. "By using Make A Difference Day to promote healthy lifestyles and disease and illness prevention, we hope to be a positive influence in people's lives and encourage Kentuckians to make changes and choices that will truly make a difference in their personal health."

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### 2005 AMERICORPS LAUNCH

The 2005 Kentucky AmeriCorps Launch proved to be a huge success. The three-day training event began with an AmeriCorps 101 panel with guest speakers explaining the different branches of AmeriCorps. Panel members included Victoria Wysel, a current AmeriCorps\*VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) member at the Franklin County United Way; Shannon Bailes, former AmeriCorps member and current program director of KY-READS; Jake Mercier, former AmeriCorps\*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) member and current program director of Getting Things Done for Kentucky's Homeless; and Eileen Latham, Director of Senior Corps for the Bluegrass Community

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4th Quarter/October 2005 Edition

### AN AMERICORPS FAMILY



Three family members are serving their second year in the AmeriCorps Senior Connections program.

Susan Blair served as a VISTA member beginning in November 2003 in the prescription assistance program at the Green River Area Development District (GRADD). On completion of her VISTA service, Susan joined the Senior Connections AmeriCorps Program at GRADD, serving individual senior clients with prescription

assistance. To meet the AmeriCorps service year requirements, Susan provided community service in the evenings and on weekends in addition to maintaining regular work hours. She wrapped up her 1700 hours by August 2005.

Susan and her sons, Brandon and Jordan, have been involved in community service and church mission work for years. All volunteer as counselors at 4-H camps in the summer and have traveled to Belize in Central America to do mission work with their church.

Brandon enrolled as a part time AmeriCorps member in December 2004. Sponsored by the Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC), he worked with a team to build wheelchair ramps and other handicap accessibility projects. Jordan enrolled as a part time AmeriCorps member in December 2004 and was sponsored by the Green River District Health Department. Jordan worked with the Community Access Program, which helps uninsured seniors and other qualified clients locate doctors to provide them treatment.

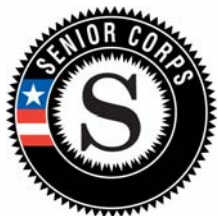
We are thrilled that all three family members have enrolled for a second year in Senior Connections. Susan will continue to serve with prescription assistance at GRADD. Jordan has enrolled for a second year to serve on the KHC team. Brandon has enrolled for a second year and will serve with a new host agency, the Housing Authority of Owensboro, where he will be serving with their 125 senior residents.

Susan has used her AmeriCorps educational awards to pay off student loans and to continue to go to school. Brandon and Jordan plan to enroll in a university next fall and will utilize their educational awards there.

Submitted by Dave Clark, SC/GRADD Program Director

*"GETTING THINGS DONE IN KENTUCKY"*

# Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE



Throughout the newsletter are small bits for your enjoyment. Keep an eye out for them.



The happy dancing man is always accompanied by a "funny." Lighten your mood a little with a short joke.



This thinking man is followed by wise witty words from many sources. Allow him to engage your mind.



This is accompanied by a brain teaser. Go ahead, see if you can catch the solution.



This icon indicates that interesting statistics follow. It also begs the question: are all things number? From the philosophy of Pythagoras who said, "all things are number."

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## WHO WE ARE

### KCCVS COMMISSIONERS

(In Alphabetical Order)

Douglas Adams	Lee Nimocks
Philip Anderson	Kitty Pilger
Susan Brammer	Emily Shelton
Amy Burk	Anna G. Smith
Miguel Carlin	Wendy Stivers Ph.D.
James Casey	Jana Sturm
Phyllis Culp	Alan Taylor
Cindy Ferrell	Kate Wenzel
Secretary Virginia Fox	Patricia Winlock
Victoria Golden	
F. Patrick Hargadon, Chair	Ex-Officio Members:
Kenneth Knipper	Betsy Wells
Brandi Moore List	

### KCCVS STAFF

(In Alphabetical Order)

Eileen Cackowski – Director  
 Melissa Newton – Training Officer  
 Shannon Ramsey – Administrative Specialist  
 Andrea Sieloff, RSM – Program Officer  
 Lanny Taulbee – Disabilities Coordinator  
 Marzelle Wurtsmith – Financial Officer

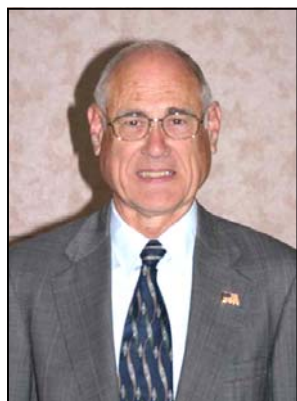
### KCCVS MISSION

To promote all Kentuckians working together to meet actual community needs in a way that fosters personal, family and community pride and an enduring ethic of volunteerism and service.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- \* A coffee tree yields about one pound of coffee in a year.
- \* More than 400,000 U.S. houses still lack indoor plumbing.
- \* An iceberg contains more heat than a lit match does.
- \* A shrimp's heart is in its head.
- \* A rainbow can only be seen in the morning or late afternoon.
- \* The moon is actually moving away from Earth at a rate of 1.5 inches per year.
- \* On average, 100 people choke to death on ballpoint pens every year.
- \* A spider's silk is stronger than steel.
- \* Dolphins nap with one eye open.

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Ken Knipper was appointed to the commission in 2004, but volunteerism has been a part of his life since high school, serving as a church youth club leader, a member of a diocesan youth advisory panel, a member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce and served as an external vice president.

However, that was only the beginning for Knipper who has now been a volunteer fire fighter since 1976, including

eight years as chief, and a volunteer emergency medical technician since 1982.

Knipper attended St. Xavier High School and St. Xavier University, both in Cincinnati. In addition to his maternal grandfather, among the biggest influences in his life are former teachers and advisors. Professionally, he spent 21 years with Prentice Hall and 15 years in the insurance field before joining the Office of Emergency Management in 1997. He currently serves as director for the office in Campbell County.

Besides serving on the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service, Knipper also serves as the volunteer representative for the Kentucky Firefighters Association, is a member of, and has served on or chaired committees for the National Volunteer Fire Council Board.

"I continue to be absolutely amazed at the good works of the people carrying out the programs the KCCVS oversees," Knipper said. "The value of the AmeriCorps programs and the contributions of the providers is incredible and I am proud to be a part of such an effort."

Knipper's hobbies include rebuilding Gravelly tractors and he is currently restoring a 1969 American Motors AMX. He also spends his free time reading auto manuals. Knipper's schedule doesn't leave much leisure time but he does love music and said his days are guided by the words of a favorite hymn, "Be Not Afraid."

Knipper has been married since 1959 to wife, Peggy who he calls a "saint." They have four daughters, Mary Jo, Catherine, Diane and Sharon and are blessed with 17 grandchildren. Knipper is constantly giving his time to his community and his wife claims that he wears so many 'hats' that he is never without one.

A natural fit for the commission, Knipper believes in making each day count for something positive. He said he'd like to be remembered as someone who "used the gifts God gave me to help others who are less fortunate."



"There is no limit to what can be accomplished if it doesn't matter who gets the credit."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

(Continued from page 1)

Action Agency. Missy Wilburn, first year member with the Kentucky Youth Leadership Corps, was one of many members who commented that the panel helped them understand the big picture of Kentucky AmeriCorps and their role as members. Beth Eaton, a first year Student Service Consortium Center member said, "Seeing the different branches of AmeriCorps and hearing what each of them do helped me to understand just how important we are. We all have a different role, but we're all working for the same cause. The possibilities are endless."

The panel discussion was followed by an opening plenary by Dr. Connie Callahan on working with people in poverty, which was praised by AmeriCorps members who said the program gave them greater insight into the issue. First year SSCC member Michelle Hoskins commented, "Now I know about how the different economic classes perceive the world around them."

That evening all the corps gathered to introduce themselves, enjoy ice cream and socialize. Many members said the Launch builds ties among AmeriCorps members. Second year SSCC member Jennifer Brown felt that the Launch enabled her to become closer with her program director and fellow members and Beth Eaton mentioned how she was able to see firsthand how dedicated her program director is. First year Senior Connections member Megan Johnson also enjoyed the opportunity to bond with her fellow AmeriCorps members and said that during the Launch she "not only learned from the speakers but also from other [members]."

On Thursday, we offered various tracks for the members, a different format from previous Launches and a welcome change. Nathan Jones, second year Getting Things Done for Kentucky's Homeless member, stated that this year's program was "much more on target" in terms of appealing to members needs and interests, and more than one member commented on how they appreciated the track choices. Jennifer Brown agreed by saying, "although I really enjoyed Launch last year, I was very impressed with this year's Launch."

The *Methamphetamine in Kentucky* workshop presented by Cheyenne Albro, Director of the Pennyriple Narcotics Task Force, was eye-opening and the source of many conversations. Jessica Darnall, a first year member with KY-READS, admitted that she did not realize the extent of methamphetamine abuse in Kentucky before the workshop. When the workshop was over, she said, "I came away from his presentation with more knowledge about the drug, a better understanding about the people who use it and why they continue to do so." Michelle Hoskins learned signs and symptoms of children affected by methamphetamine, which will aid her in her work tutoring children. Saundra Arison, first year GRADD Homeland Security member and former deputy sheriff, was "surprised at all the new information I learned," and was "impressed with the class."

Workshops such as the *United States Constitution* and the *Ken-*

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3)

*tucky Constitution* taught by Dr. William Thames of Eastern Kentucky University were described as impressive. Angie Poynter, first year Student Service Consortium Center member, said that Dr. Thames' passion for history brought his stories to life. She also said, "Since I am not from Kentucky, it was good to know about the people from Kentucky who made an impact on our nation."



*Leadership Skills and Team-building* workshops with Mike King were also widely discussed. Sandra Arison attended the *Teambuilding* workshop and described it as one of her favorites. She said that Mike King "kept every student laughing while learning valuable information at the same time."

*Recognizing Child Abuse* by Natalie Kelly, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence, and Rashmi Adi-Brown, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky, and *Working with People with Learning Disabilities* by Peggy Blanton, Director of Special Education for Fayette County Schools, were described by Beth Eaton as very informative and "vital to us members that work within the school systems." Angie Poynter said that she learned a broader definition of child abuse as well as how to report it, which will be invaluable to her service as a reading tutor.

Other workshops included *Homeless Issues* by Judy Levey, Executive Director for the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky; *Aging Services in Kentucky* and *Baby Boomer Generation* by Bill Cooper, Director of Aging Services; and *Grant Writing* by KCCVS Commissioner Phyllis Culp. These workshops were described as both informative and engaging. Jessica Darnall commented that the participation required in the workshops "kept our attention and helped us to learn more. We were not just listening, but we were actually able to be a part of the presentation." Michelle Kitchen, first year member of Kentucky's Promise Corps, said that the presenters "knew that AmeriCorps members are trying to make a difference. They reinforced the notion that even if we thought that we had failed or not made a difference, that we did make a difference just by trying."



Friday, the last day of the Launch, started with a motivational closing plenary from Mike King, who talked about the wonderful work the AmeriCorps members will be doing in the coming months. He used a colorful, yet clear analogy comparing the journey of an AmeriCorps member's service year to Dorothy's journey down the yellow brick road in *The Wizard of Oz*. He emphasized that the story is not in the yellow brick road, but in the characters you meet along your journey. Nathan Jones said, "Mike King is an excep-

tional facilitator and should be commissioned for all AmeriCorps trainings."

After the closing plenary, members were adjourned to gather their belongings and head to the Capitol steps for the Induction/Swearing-In ceremony. Speaking at the ceremony were Pat Hargadon, Chairman of the KCCVS Commission; Marla Montell, Commissioner of the Department for Human Support Services in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services; and Dr. James W. Holsinger, Jr., Secretary for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. At the start of the ceremony, AmeriCorps members joyfully marched up the steps of the Capitol to Disney's *Millennium March* with their program banners proudly displayed. First year Student Service Consortium Center member Kathy Bennett said she "did not realize how many AmeriCorps members are at work in the Commonwealth of Kentucky."



Other members gave the program a rave review. Robert Bailey, second year member of the Senior Connections program, led ceremony attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, which he described as "the most enjoyable happening at Launch". Jim Wurtsmith sang the *Star Spangled Banner* and *My Old Kentucky Home* and members of the Cadet Leadership Education Program, a program with the Department of Juvenile Justice, presented the colors. The AmeriCorps Program Directors and the AmeriCorps members took their oaths of service, administered by Secretary Holsinger. Kathy Bennett said, "As we processed up the Capitol steps and recited our oath in unison, I was filled with a great sense of pride and purpose." Jen Posey proclaimed that she has "never felt so proud to be a part of something." But, she admitted, "It was a bit overwhelming."

After the ceremony, members enjoyed a picnic lunch before heading home to begin their year of service to their communities. Before it was over, more than one person had shed a tear, but they were tears of joy and pride. "I believe Launch is just what [AmeriCorps members] need to start the program year," said Jennifer Brown, "because you leave the Launch feeling as if you can move mountains." Michelle Hoskins summed it up by saying, "although I am only one, I am a part of many."



Pictures and individual member reflections will be posted on our web site, <http://volunteerKY.ky.gov/> as soon as possible.



### Brain Teaser: A to Z

Use all twenty-six letters of the alphabet to complete the following 13 words, but use each letter only once.

ba _ _ ain	l _ _ ger	dy _ _ sty
_ _ gote	sa _ _ ation	di _ _ pan
pum _ _ in	de _ _ ay	bo _ _ ar
di _ _ it	sun _ _ rn	obl _ _ ue
li _ _ off	(Answer on Page 6)	

(Continued from page 1)

The staff and leadership of the KCCVS invite all to visit the Make A Difference Day health education fair October 21 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on the St. Clair Street Mall in Frankfort. The fair will feature health-related product and service vendors, demonstrations and information exhibits to empower and motivate visitors to make responsible, healthy lifestyle choices.

As a special bonus, Tink Greenwell of Tink's Bar B Q, a long-time St. Clair Mall fixture, will offer a healthy grilled lunch selection for health fair visitors.

"As summer draws to an end and we spend more time indoors, we want to remind everyone that good health practices – including exercise and diet – need to continue year-round," Cackowski said. "The timing of our Make A Difference Day health fair offers a chance to reenergize folks who are already involved in personal health and wellness activities and to motivate others to take steps to improve their quality of life by improving their health."



"Courtesy is the true alchemy, turning all it touches to gold." - Author Unknown

## WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT

Shannon Lynn DeLong, daughter of Sam and Carol DeLong of Nicholasville, and Michael Travis Ramsey, son of Gary and Gaynell Ramsey of Corinth, were married on August 6. The ceremony was held at Georgetown College's John L. Hill chapel and the reception was held at Cardome Centre in Georgetown. Lambert DeLong, the bride's grandfather, officiated with the pastoral charge and Michael DeLong, the bride's uncle, officiated with the vows and exchange of rings.



The maid of honor was Kathe Cohagen and bridesmaids were Alycia Alejandro and Carrie Bryant. The flower girl was Bailey Bryant. The best man was Jeremy Hisle and the groomsmen were Bret Spencer and Jarrod Michael. The junior groomsman/ring bearer was Chase Copeland. Ushers were Ryan DeLong and Josh Grant. Laura Goepper served as pianist.

Mrs. Ramsey is a 2000 graduate of West Jessamine High School and graduated magna cum laude from Georgetown College in 2004. Shannon is the administrative specialist for the KCCVS and contributing editor of The Heart Line. Mr. Ramsey is a 1995 graduate of Scott County High School and served two years in the United States Marine Corps. He is employed with RCI Contracting in Crittenden.

The couple honeymooned in Orlando, Fla. and the Ramseys are making their home in Georgetown with their cat, Jezebel and Lucky, their yellow Labrador retriever puppy.

## FROM THE TRAINING DESK

The coming of the fall season has the KCCVS staff busy as the bees in my backyard. After hosting a successful 3-day AmeriCorps Launch, planning and promoting Make A Difference Day and holding statewide meetings on trends in volunteerism and AmeriCorps grant information, we are truly ready for the upcoming holiday break! At the same time, we are hopeful about the possibilities and opportunities that come with a new year.

We have two training events in the planning stages. Midwinter, a training for AmeriCorps designed to give the members a "shot in the arm" after a busy holiday season, which is tentatively scheduled for February 21 and February 23, 2006. We will offer informative and fun sessions that include budgeting skills and a review of Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." We hope the AmeriCorps members will enjoy a day away from their regular service activities, gain information from skilled presenters and have a nice lunch with the opportunity to network with members from other programs. We are also looking toward the spring when we will offer an AmeriCorps Program Directors' retreat that will include networking opportunities and various training sessions. More details about this event will be available, as they are determined.

Submitted by Melissa Newton, KCCVS Training Officer

## 2005 GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The staff and commission of the KCCVS are currently revising the nomination form for the 2005 Governor's Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service. The KCCVS is also putting together the Governor's Awards Judging Committee, which undertakes the daunting task of reading and scoring the nomination forms.

The Governor's Awards Judging Committee consists of both commissioners and community members. Each nomination form is read and scored by three independent committee members. The number of committee members needed depends on the number of nomination forms received, but we would like to have more than necessary. Committee members will read and score approximately a dozen nomination forms. Each nomination form takes approximately 30 minutes to read and score. Scored nomination forms will be due around the end of January. Packets of nomination forms may be mailed to committee members or the committee may meet one day in Frankfort for judging. If you have a background in volunteerism and/or community service and would like to volunteer to be a member on the Governor's Awards Judging Committee, please e-mail Shannon at [shannon.ramsey@ky.gov](mailto:shannon.ramsey@ky.gov).

If you would like to be added to the Governor's Awards mailing list, please e-mail Shannon at [shannon.ramsey@ky.gov](mailto:shannon.ramsey@ky.gov).

If you are considering entering a nomination for the 2005 Governor's Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service, please read "Writing Award Winning Nominations" on page 7 for some helpful tips.

## NEW KCCVS STAFF MEMBER



"It's awesome when you find a career that you're perfectly suited for," says Lanny Taulbee, the new disabilities coordinator for KCCVS. "All my adult life, I've been in training for this position."

Lanny was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at the age of 7 and by the time he was 10, he could no longer walk and used a tricycle to get around. Lanny attended high school with

the help of a wheelchair purchased through an educational program. After high school, he underwent a series of surgeries that enabled him to walk with the use of crutches.

Lanny majored in fine arts at the University of Kentucky, studied advertising design at the Art Institute of Ft. Lauderdale and majored in architectural technology at Lexington Community College. He has worked as a paste-up artist in the display advertising department for a daily newspaper, assisted the editor of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association's monthly membership magazine, the Cow Country News and worked in other art-related positions.

Artistically, Lanny's skills are versatile. He is accomplished in media including oils, watercolor, acrylics and pencil and ink, and his work has been featured in a number of gallery and show exhibits. In 2001, he participated in The Guild's first exhibit at Barnes and Noble Booksellers and in 2002, he was chosen through a juried selection process to exhibit his works at the Kentucky Appalachian Artisan Center in Hindman. Lanny's work also has been shown in exhibits sponsored by Louisville's Center for Accessible Living and in 2003 he received best in category honors and his work "Horse Gazing" received the People's Choice Award at The Guild's Singletary Center exhibit.

During his education, training and previous employment, Lanny found help and support through various programs, including Medicaid, food stamps, supplemental security income, Social Security disability income and services from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Sometimes things went smoothly, but often, he said, "it was a nightmare, dealing with changes in policy, overpayments and disqualifications."

"Now I can utilize all that I've learned through first-hand experience to assist others in my position at the KCCVS," he said. "As disabilities coordinator, I will be encouraging other persons with disabilities to take a chance and further enrich their lives by becoming AmeriCorps members. All the while, I will be watching out for them to see that their needs are addressed while completing their terms of service, and guiding them through the maze of disability-related services."

*Answer to Brain Teaser (Page 4)*



bargain	lodger	dynasty
zygote	salvation	dishpan
pumpkin	deejay	boxcar
dimwit	sunburn	oblique
liftoff		

<http://school.discovery.com/brainboosters/>

## NOTE FROM OUR TRAINING OFFICER

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the presenters who came to the Launch and shared their expertise and time with us. I would also like to thank the various dignitaries who shared the Induction/Swearing-In ceremony with the members, the staff and the KCCVS commissioners. The KCCVS appreciates the support of AmeriCorps in Kentucky and could not have had such a successful Launch without your help. We heard from many members who said they were inspired, pushed their boundaries and learned so much from all these folks. Launch presenters included Mike King, Natalie Kelly, Rashmi Adi-Brown, Cheyenne Albro, Peggy Blanton, Phyllis Culp, Bill Cooper, Judy Levey, Shannon Bailes, Jake Mercier, Eileen Latham, Victoria Wysel, Connie Callahan, and William Thames

I also want to thank the AmeriCorps members. They are a group of dedicated citizens who have pledged to spend the coming months making citizens of the Commonwealth safer, smarter and healthier; who will bring Kentuckians together to strengthen communities; who will take action, seek common ground and persevere, who are AmeriCorps members and will get things done.

Sincerely,

*Melissa Newton*

I like to travel every now and then to see new and exciting places or things. Well, anyway, I recently visited a jungle area where we (the touring group and I) were talking with some natives. I noticed one native gentleman wearing a unique looking necklace, and curious as I am, decided to question him about it.



"What is it made of?" I asked.

"Alligator's teeth," he replied.

"Oh, that's interesting," I said. "I suppose they mean as much to you as pearls do to us."

"Oh no," he objected. "Anybody can open an oyster."

From <http://www.cleanjokeoftheday.com/>

## NEW PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Brian Perry has been hired by Kentucky Child Now to lead the Kentucky Youth Leadership Corps after spending four years with the Kentucky YMCA as their northeast regional director. He became involved with Kentucky Child Now by volunteering for the LexFUSION community mapping project and the Kentucky Youth Development Partnership. Originally from Woodford County, Brian graduated from Guilford College in Greensboro, NC in 1998 with degrees in psychology and justice & policy studies. He returned to the Commonwealth in 1999 and currently resides in Lexington. Interests outside the office include motorcycles, reading, wakeboarding and snowboarding, among other things.



## WRITING AWARD-WINNING NOMINATIONS

*Mary Merrill is a name to know in volunteer management and training. Our "next-door neighbor in Ohio," Mary has a reputation of researching her material carefully and of writing very practical pieces. She also has her theoretical side, where she and other leaders in volunteer management ponder the bigger picture of volunteers, volunteer management and how the two can best enhance the service for all. Since it is almost time for the Governor's Volunteer Award nomination forms to be mailed, we wanted to take some time to give you some good tips on writing the narrative. Good luck and we know before we start that all volunteers are winners. The following is an excerpt from Mary Merrill's October 2003's Topic of the Month entitled "Writing Award Winning Nominations."*

Nominators play a critical role in the nominating process. You cannot assume that because you are nominating a well-known and respected person from your profession that those reading the nominating form will know this unless **you** accurately and personally convey that information. Here are a few tips I have learned to help me with the awards process.

Read the nominating form very carefully. Be sure you have adequately answered all the questions. It is especially sad to see a candidate eliminated because critical, required information has been overlooked or omitted. Go back through each question after you have written your response and be sure you have answered the question.

Always assume that the judge does not know your candidate. Also, assume that the judge is reading multiple nominations and is looking carefully for the information required. Too much information can be as harmful as too little information. Don't make the judge read through wonderful, glowing language to find the real heart of the answer. Be direct and then support what you have to say with observation and fact.

Don't think you have to keep your nomination a secret or do it by yourself. Most people are highly flattered that a colleague thinks enough of them to nominate them for an award. Talk to your nominee. Ask them the questions and listen for information you can use to support your own thoughts and ideas. Call other colleagues and discuss the nominee with them. Call people that work for and with the nominee. Gather as much information and background as possible. Be accurate. Don't guess or generalize. Give specific examples to reinforce what you are saying. Give several examples to show patterns or professional growth over time.

Organize your thoughts carefully and follow the nominating form. Personalize. Focus on key questions on the nomination form: detail accomplishments and their impact; describe leadership abilities; and, describe how the nominee has made a difference in the community through and with volunteerism.

Don't just talk about what the person is/has done. Share what stands out. What makes this person outstanding? How have these accomplishments had an impact - on people, the community and

the profession? Create a unique picture of your applicant. What makes them stand out from all the rest? Remember, longevity is often not part of the criteria. Consider how they have taken their position and made an impact, for the organization, the volunteers, and/or the community.

Talk with your nominee and those that work with the individual to identify specific ways they have exhibited leadership. What organizations do they belong to? What leadership positions have they assumed, both within their organization and within the larger community? What projects have they taken on/accomplished that demonstrate leadership, whether they were officially in a leadership role or not

Share how your nominee reflects core values and beliefs regarding volunteerism. Where and when do they volunteer? Does the individual see volunteerism as an opportunity for personal growth and do they exhibit a willingness to engage in volunteer activities to increase their personal skills and knowledge? Do they believe that volunteers can and do change the world, and how do they reflect this through personal example? How do they foster excellence and leadership development in others? Do they encourage volunteers to assume leadership roles? What qualities do they exhibit and foster that reflects their internal beliefs about volunteerism? Ask your nominee to talk about their personal philosophy of volunteerism and then give examples of how they live this out.

Share examples of how they have served as role model and/or mentor for others. It is often very helpful to talk with co-workers (paid and non-paid) to gather this information. Ask co-workers to write a letter of support that details a particular quality or aspect you are writing about. This may be more effective than a general letter that says your nominee is a great person.

Describe unique characteristics that are more than just what a great or nice person this nominee is. Choose one or two qualities that make this person truly outstanding and then give specific examples. Talk about difficulties the nominee may have faced and how the applicant dealt with them. Share personal skills such as listening, teambuilding, collaboration, creativity, and professionalism.

If you are nominating a volunteer manager for excellence in the profession, this is your chance to say how you think the colleague performs his/her work in a manner that exemplifies all that we value. Why should this person be held up as an example for all of us? Years of service, being a nice, caring person or always being willing to help are not in themselves outstanding. These characteristics should be one part of a bigger picture of someone who exemplifies excellence.

I hope you are looking for those shining stars in our profession - new to the field, quietly effective, veteran professionals, out-of-the-box thinkers, friends, colleagues, paid and non-paid professionals - and seize opportunities to nominate them for community awards. We need high achievers and everyday heroes in our profession and we need to take every opportunity to lift up these stars and promote the best about our chosen profession.

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## WHAT'S ON OUR CALENDAR?

### OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER/JANUARY

- \* **October** – Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- \* **October 4** – Rosh Hashana
- \* **October 5** – First day of Ramadan
- \* **October 10** – Columbus Day
- \* **October 22** – Make A Difference Day
- \* **October 30** – End of Daylight Savings Time
- \* **October 31** – Halloween
- \* **November 8** – Election Day
- \* **November 11** – Veterans Day
- \* **November 19** – National Family Volunteer Day
- \* **November 24** – Thanksgiving Day
- \*
- \* **December 7** – Pearl Harbor Day
- \* **December 21** – Winter Solstice
- \* **December 24** – Christmas Eve
- \* **December 25** – Christmas
- \* **December 26** – Hanukkah and Kwanza begin
- \* **December 31** – New Year's Eve
- \* **January 1** – New Year's Day
- \* **January 2** – Last day of Hanukkah
- \* **January 16** – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- \* **January 31** – Muharramn/Jewish New Year

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### NEXT ISSUE

- ◆ Introduction to our new commissioners
- ◆ Program Spotlight: Kentucky Youth Leadership Corps
- ◆ More information on the Governor's Volunteer Awards
- ◆ 2005 Make A Difference Day Results
- ◆ More information on Midwinter



Kentucky is a place where spirits are free to soar and big dreams can be fulfilled. We relish competition and cherish our champions for their willingness to push beyond conventional boundaries to reach new heights of success.



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THE KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY  
VOLUNTEERISM AND SERVICE

THE CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

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The Commission's  
web site is  
<http://volunteerky.ky.gov/>